

Students from a government... in Sterling Heights. Junior Mairay Marlow, 17, said she's eager to learn more about how the election process works.

# Macomb students to help in school elections

*2-hour session  
trains them to  
meet challenge*

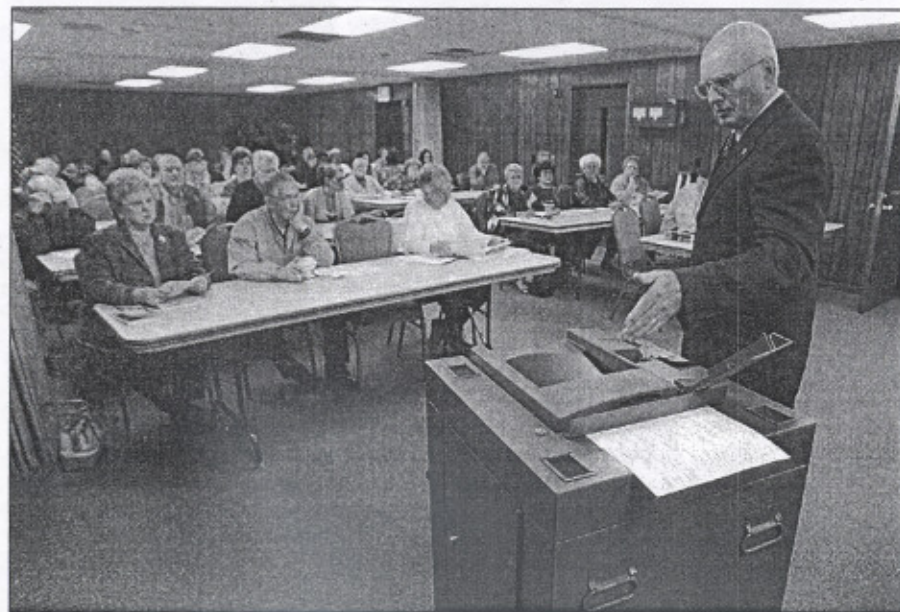
By SHABINA S. KHATRI  
FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Some high school students listened attentively. Others played with their cell phones. One fell asleep — all in the name of democracy.

The students were among nearly 50 Macomb County residents who attended a training session for election inspectors Monday.

In addition to the regular inspectors, 82 students from five school districts — Chippewa Valley Schools, Utica Community Schools, Mt. Clemens Community Schools, L'Anse Creuse Public Schools and New Haven Community Schools — have signed up to work the polls as election inspectors May 2, said Carmella Sabaugh, county clerk.

"It's such a good opportunity," Sabaugh said. "The young people can see the process of the



Election consultant Bob Devers, 68, of Ray Township explains how to operate a voting machine Monday. Students from five school districts attended the training and will be paid \$7 an hour to make sure that voters are registered and ballots are kept confidential and are counted. The vote is to be held May 2.

help make sure that people are registered to vote and that ballots are kept confidential. Once the elections are over, they will help count ballots and report the results.

Senior volunteers who attended Monday's session were eager to offer their advice to the students.

"Make sure to bring a book or something to pass the time," said Barbara Harris, 66, of Clinton Township, a precinct chairwoman who added that the students might get bored because voter turnout is usually low for school elections.

That's fine with Mairay Marlow, a 17-year-old Mt. Clemens High junior who has interned for Democratic U.S. Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan.

Marlow said she wants to learn how the election process works, but doesn't plan to go into government because she wants to be a veterinarian.

"I like to help out, but it's not for me," she said.

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election firsthand — plus, they get paid for it."

To qualify as an election worker, students must be at least 16 years old. They also have to attend one of this week's training sessions, which are designed to prepare workers for any challenges they may face while manning the voting booths next week.

But during the session Monday, the finer points of the election process seemed to be lost on many attendees, including Keturah Bonner, who slept through the whole thing.

The 17-year-old Mt. Clemens High School junior said she signed up to work as an inspector because it pays \$7 an hour — and it gives her a chance to get

out of school for a while.

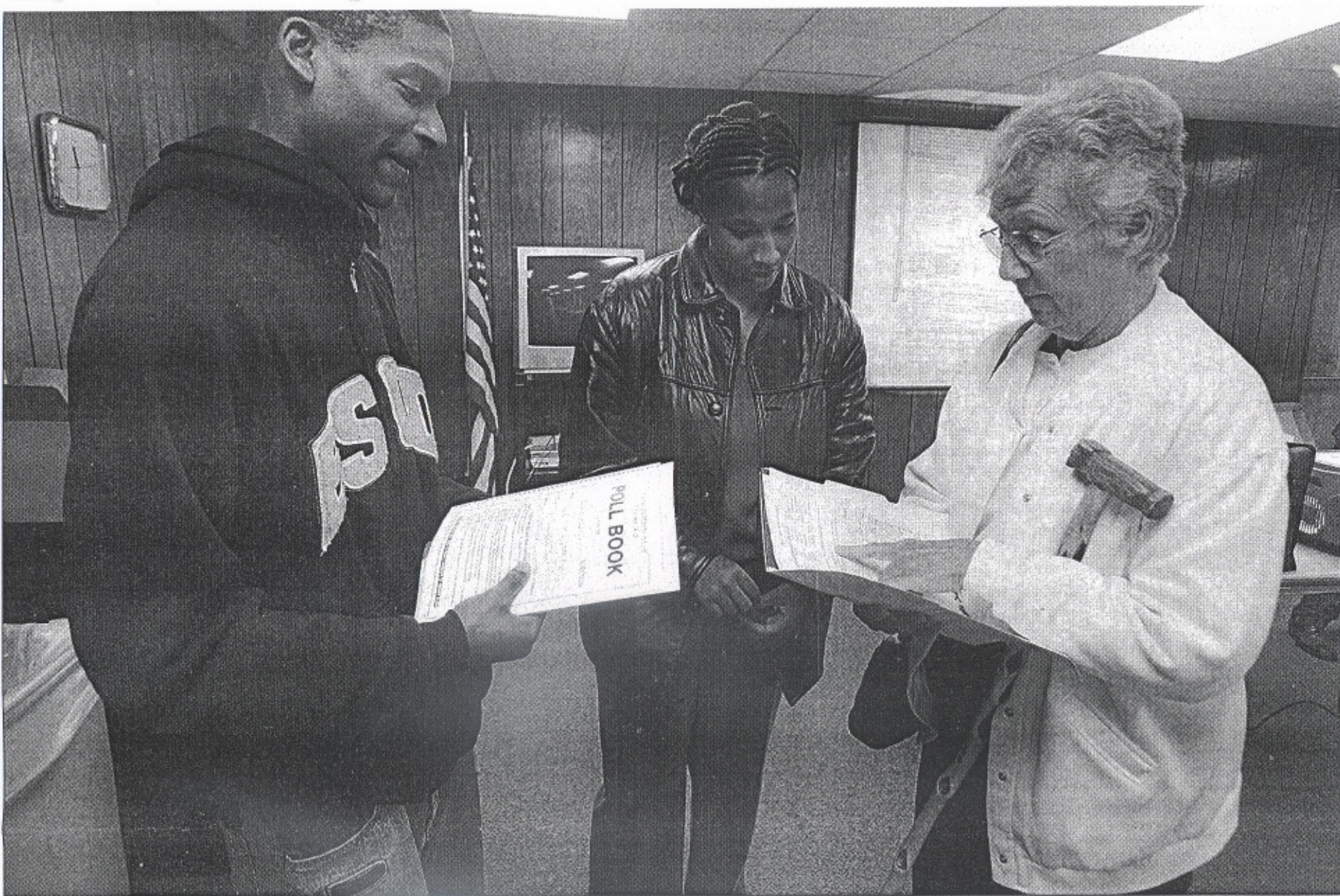
Bonner's classmate Sabrina Finnegan said she thought the two-hour session, which ran late, was long, "but informative."

"I'm thinking about going into politics," the 16-year-old junior said. "I'm looking forward to the actual election day."

On May 2, student inspectors will work half-day shifts and

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Photos by MARY SCHROEDER/Detroit Free Press

Students from a government class at Mt. Clemens High go over materials and get advice from a precinct chairwoman, Barbara Harris, 66, of Clinton Township, on Monday at Freedom Hill in Sterling Heights. Junior Mairay Marlow, 17, said she's eager to learn more about how the election process works. Senior Isiah Dowell, 17, is with her.